

ROBERT E. LATTA  
5TH DISTRICT, OHIO

ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP

VICE CHAIRMAN  
CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S CAUCUS

COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3505**

March 21, 2013

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
1323 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
(202) 225-6405

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
1045 NORTH MAIN STREET  
SUITE 6  
BOWLING GREEN, OH 43402  
(419) 354-8700

101 CLINTON STREET  
SUITE 1200  
DEFIANCE, OH 43512  
(419) 782-1996

11 EAST MAIN STREET  
NORWALK, OH 44857  
(419) 668-0206

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

Religious freedom is one of the core principles our great nation is built upon, and a principle that we all must work towards ensuring is upheld. Unfortunately, not all nations value this principle and persecute those who do not share their same religious beliefs, as is the case with Iran's government.

During a March 15, 2013 Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing, witnesses spoke in depth on Iran's human rights violations and persecution of religious minorities, including the imprisonment of United States citizen, Saeed Abedini, whose only crime was his belief in Christianity. As you are aware, last September, while on a humanitarian mission in Iran to open an orphanage, Mr. Abedini was arrested by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and in January was sentenced to eight years in an Iranian prison for his Christian beliefs. At the hearing, Naghmeh Abedini, Saeed Abedini's wife, described the inhumane treatment Mr. Abedini has endured since being imprisoned in Iran, including torture and being forced to renounce his Christianity.

I appreciate your recent statements condemning Iran's continued violation of the universal right of freedom of religion and calling for the release of Mr. Abedini; however, I ask that you continue to use all diplomatic efforts to secure Mr. Abedini's immediate and unconditional release. I thank you for your time and look forward to your response.

Respectfully,



Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress